

HISTORY OF THE ABIPONES.

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enemies than to be loved, to terrify than attract
 beholders, think the more they are scarred and
 sun-burnt, the handsomer they are. 142 293 832

I observed that almost all the Abipones had
 black but rather small eyes; yet they see more
 acutely with them, than we do with our larger
 ones; being able clearly to distinguish such
 minute, or distant objects as would escape the
 eye of the most quick-sighted European. Fre-
 quently, in travelling, when we saw some ani-
 mal running at a distance, and were unable to
 distinguish what it was, an Abipon would
 declare, without hesitation, whether it was a
 horse or a mule, and whether the colour was
 black, white, or grey; and on examining the
 object more closely, we always found him
 correct. 151

Moreover, in symmetry of shape, the Abi-
 pones yield to no other nation of America. I
 scarce remember to have seen one of them with
 a nose like what we see in the generality of
 Negroes, flat, crooked, turned up towards the
 forehead, or broader than it should be. The
 commonest shape is aquiline; as long and sharp
 as is consistent with beauty. An hundred de-
 formities and blemishes, common among Euro-
 peans, are foreign to them. You never see an
 Abipon with a hump on his back, a wen, a hare-
 lip, a monstrous belly, bandy legs, club feet, or 142 732 •

- 732 an impediment in his speech. They have white teeth, almost all of which they generally carry to the grave quite sound. Paraguay sometimes [136] produces dwarf horses, but never a dwarf Abipon, or any other Indian. Certain it is, that out of so many thousands of Indians, I never saw an individual of that description. Almost [142] all the Abipones are so tall, that they might be enlisted amongst the Austrian musketeers.

The Abipones, as I told you before, are destitute of beard, and have perfectly smooth chins like all the other Indians, both of whose parents are Americans. If you see an Indian with a little beard, you may conclude, without hesitation, that one of his parents, or at any rate his grandfather, must have been of European extraction. I do not deny that a kind of down grows on the chins of the Americans, just as in sandy sterile fields, a straggling ear of corn is seen here and there; but even this they pull up by the roots whenever it grows. The office of [305] barber is performed by an old woman, who sits 302 on the ground by the fire, takes the head of the Abipon into her lap, sprinkles and rubs his face plentifully with hot ashes, which serve instead of soap, and then, with a pair of elastic horn tweezers, carefully plucks up all the hairs; which operation the savages declare to be devoid of pain, and that I might give the more credit to his